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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/035,344	01/04/2002	Daniel M. Cimbor	2318-288-II	2255
6449	7590	12/06/2004	EXAMINER	
ROTHWELL, FIGG, ERNST & MANBECK, P.C. 1425 K STREET, N.W. SUITE 800 WASHINGTON, DC 20005			LANDSMAN, ROBERT S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1647	

DATE MAILED: 12/06/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/035,344

Applicant(s)

CIMBORA ET AL.

Examiner

Robert Landsman

Art Unit

1647

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 November 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-116 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 2-45 and 51-116 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 46-50 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. Formal Matters

- A. The Amendment dated 11/24/04 has been entered into the record.
- B. Claims 1-116 were pending. Claims 2-45, 51, 52 and 57-116 have been withdrawn as being drawn to a non-elected invention. Applicants canceled claims 53-56. therefore, claims 1-52 and 57-116 are pending and claims 1 and 46-50 are the subject of this Office Action. It is brought to Applicants attention that claim 53 is stated as canceled in Applicants' Response. However, it is stated as withdrawn in the listing of claims.
- C. All Statutes under 35 USC not found in this Office Action can be found, cited in full, in a previous Office Action.

2. Specification

- A. The objection to the specification has been withdrawn in view of Applicants' amendment to the title.

3. Claim Objections

- A. The objection to claim 46 has been withdrawn in view of Applicants' amendment to add a colon after "comprising."

4. Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

- A. Claims 1 and 46-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is not supported by a specific, substantial and credible asserted utility or a well established utility. These claims are directed to isolated protein complexes and methods of using these complexes in drug screening. However, the invention encompassed by these claims has no apparent or disclosed patentable utility. This rejection is consistent with the current utility guidelines, published 1/5/01, 66 FR 1092. The instant application has provided a description of an isolated protein complex. However, the instant application does not disclose a specific and substantial biological role of this protein complex or its significance.

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Applicants have only demonstrated that these complexes exist, but do not disclose what the utility is of these complexes or their association to any disease state. As of now, the instant claims are drawn to a protein complex which has a yet undetermined function or biological significance. There is no actual and specific significance which can be attributed to said protein complex identified in the specification. For this reason, the instant invention is incomplete. In the absence of a knowledge of the natural ligands or biological significance of this protein, there is no immediately obvious patentable use for it. To employ a protein complex of the instant invention in the identification of substances which bind to and/or mediate activity of the said receptor is clearly to use it as the object of further research which has been determined by the courts to be a non-patentable utility. Since the instant specification does not disclose a "real-world" use for said protein then the claimed invention is incomplete and, therefore, does not meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101 as being useful.

There is little doubt that, after complete characterization, this protein will probably be found to have a patentable utility. This further characterization, however, is part of the act of invention and, until it has been undertaken, Applicants' claimed invention is incomplete.

Furthermore, since the protein complexes of the invention are not supported by a specific and substantial asserted utility or a well established utility, the methods of using these complexes also lack utility.

5. Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112, first paragraph - enablement

A. Claims 1 and 46-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to adequately teach how to use the instant invention. Specifically, since the claimed invention is not supported by a specific, substantial and credible asserted utility or a well established utility for the reasons set forth above, one skilled in the art clearly would not know how to use the claimed invention.

6. Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112, second paragraph

A. Claims 46-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 47 recites that the screening method is performed in vitro. Since the claims depend from claim 1, which recites isolated complexes, it is unclear what other screening can be used other than in vitro.

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7. Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

A. All rejections under 35 USC 102 have been withdrawn in view of Applicants' amendments to the claims to clarify that the protein complexes are of the specific proteins recited in the claims and not just of any protein-protein complex.

8. Conclusion

A. No claim is allowable.

Advisory information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Robert Landsman whose telephone number is (571) 272-0888. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 9 AM-6 PM (eastern); alt F 9 AM-6 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brenda Brumback can be reached on 571-272-0961. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Robert Landsman
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1647


ROBERT LANDSMAN
PATENT EXAMINER